



Committee on Constitutional Affairs  
The Chair

To the Chairperson(s) of the committee(s) concerned

Dear Chair,

I have the pleasure of inviting you to an Inter-parliamentary Committee Meeting that the Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO) will hold on Tuesday, 22 June 2021.

The main aim of this meeting is to exchange views and to reflect with the national Parliaments on the European electoral law (Article 223 TFEU), and on the provisions governing the right of inquiry (Article 226 TFEU).

Since 1976, when the European Electoral Act established the election of the representatives of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, Parliament has consistently strived to reform the EU electoral law and move towards a more a genuine, uniform and truly European electoral procedure.

On the other hand, the European Parliament's right of inquiry, currently governed by Decision 95/167/EC, Euratom, ECSC of 19 April 1995, constitutes one of the core parliamentary competences, and the increased responsibilities of the European Parliament have made more urgent a clearer definition of its right of inquiry.

In both cases, however, the proposals of Parliament have faced considerable obstacles.

Indeed, regarding the Electoral law, its latest reform, concluded in 2018, although not overly ambitious in terms of final outcome, has not yet entered into force for lack of ratification in all Member States. As for the right of inquiry, Parliament's efforts for reforming the current legal framework have largely stalled since 2011.

We deem that an Inter-parliamentary Committee Meeting on those issues is essential in order to ensure a sufficiently reasoned and mature debate on policy and institutional choices allowing us to move forward on such important files, and on which AFCO is preparing new solutions, under the rapporteurship of Mr. Domènec Ruiz Devesa (S&D, ES).

Indeed, not only the European Parliament's legislative proposal on the European electoral law will be forwarded to the national Parliaments, in accordance with Protocol No 1 on the Role of National Parliaments in the European Union, but national Parliaments will play a crucial role in the phase of approval by Member states in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures of the final text agreed by the Council, following European Parliament's consent. It is thus highly appropriate and timely to hold a debate on this between the national Parliaments and the European Parliament at this early preparatory stage of the procedure.

Moreover, and regarding the powers of inquiry, the extensive experience of national Parliaments in the exercise of such parliamentary powers is for the European Parliament of great value in view of determining the best way ahead.

Also invited to the meeting are the Vice-Presidents of the European Commission, Věra Jourová (Values and Transparency) and Maroš Šefčovič (Inter-institutional Relations and Foresight).

I would thus like to cordially invite you, together with a small delegation from your committee, to the Inter-parliamentary Committee Meeting of AFCO, to be held on 22 June 2021, which will be divided in two panels aimed at discussing separately the reform of the European Electoral law and the European Parliament's right of inquiry.

In this context, I would be very pleased to welcome up to four Members of the relevant committee(s) from each national Parliament (two from each Chamber in the case of bi-cameral Parliaments) to attend this meeting. Due to the sanitary prevention measures, which are still in force in the European Parliament, the meeting will take place by remote participation. Should you be unable to attend, I would welcome any written contribution, which would be distributed to our Members and other participants.

Practical and technical details concerning the connection regarding the meeting will be forwarded in due course to your Parliament's services for relations with the European Parliament.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to accept this invitation, and I am looking forward to your participation in this event on 22 June 2021 and to a constructive and fruitful debate.

In attachment, you will find a copy of the draft programme of the meeting. A final copy will be circulated closer to the date of the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Antonio Tajani', followed by a horizontal line.

Antonio Tajani

Encl: Draft Programme of the Inter-parliamentary Committee Meeting of 22 June 2021